

INVESTIGATIVE REPORT:

This report pertains to an investigation of the identification of the burial location, or headstone markings, of a member of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) during the Great War 1914-1921.

SUBMITTED TO:

[CWGC Canadian Agency](#)

66 Slater Street

Suite 1707

Ottawa Ontario Canada K1A 0P4

Att: [Dominique Boulais](#)

Report Date: 14 October 2015

Reason for Submission: ("X" means purpose of the report)

Casualty Identification:		Burial Information:	
Confirmed Identity	X	Burial Location Identified	X
Most Probable Identity		Grave Stone Correction	X
Questionable Identity		Grave Records Correction	X
Incorrect Identity		Request for CWGC Details	
Other		Other	

Supporting Documents: (# refers to attachment number; "I" information provided)

Casualty Identification:		Burial Information:	
Cranage, Herbert	i	Courcelette British Cemetery	link
5 th Infantry Battalion	i	Somme, France	i
Private #441261	i	Plot, Row, Grave	i
Date of Death 27/09/1916	link	Date of Burial / Exhumation	i
Attestation Papers	link	Cemetery Schematic	link
Service Record	link	Graves Registration Report	7
Circumstance of Death	1	Concentration of Grave	8
CEF Canada Register	2	Headstone Register	
War Diary Extract(s)	3	Casualty Spreadsheet	
Area Map(s)	4	Trench Map Exhumation	
Trench Map(s)	5	Grave Stone Photograph	
Possible Candidates List	6	Grave Stone Inscription	
Excluded Candidates List		Memorial Inscription/Photo	
Other		Reporting and Review	9

Summary of Findings:

The Concentration of Graves – Burial Return for Courcelette British Cemetery lists a Canadian Soldier, Private #41261 in Plot 8 Row B Grave 12. The Graves Registration Report Form altered that information and records the change to an Unknown British Soldier.

The review of the file shows that the COG-BR was correct, other than the number was #441261, that being Private Herbert Cranage of the 5th Canadian Infantry Battalion.

Details of Findings:

The findings are conclusive that the remains in Plot 8 Row B Grave 12 of the Courcelette British Cemetery are those of Private Herbert Cranage #441261 of the 5th Infantry Battalion, 2nd Infantry Brigade, 1st Canadian Division, Canadian Expeditionary Force.

The findings are based on the following:

1. The "Circumstance of Death" file for Private Herbert Cranage #441261 shows that he was "*previously reported wounded and missing and for official purposes resumed to have died*" near Courcelette, France on or since September 27, 1916 (Attachment #1).
2. The CEF Canada Register for Private Cranage of the 5th Infantry Battalion shows no additional information concerning the burial site of the soldier and thus shows that his name is to be added to the Vimy Memorial (Attachment #2).
3. The War Diary of the 5th Canadian Infantry Battalion provides clear evidence that the 5th Infantry Battalion was in the Hessian Trench in the area where the remains were found on September 27, 1916. It is reported that at 10 pm "*after bringing out all of the wounded and burying most of the dead*" the battalion proceeded to billets near Albert (Attachment #3).
4. The location of the 5th Canadian Infantry Battalion on 26 September 1916 is depicted in Sketch 29 of Nicholson for the Battle of Thiepval Ridge. The area is to the west of Courcelette, with the battalion showing moving north across Zollern Graben, through the Hessian Trench objective to the edge of Regina Trench (Attachment #4).
5. The area where the action took place on the 26th and 27th of September 1916 is illustrated on a period trench map which notes the area of the activity as Map 57d Sector R29. Sector 29 is shown as a red square with the general location of the 5th Battalion as a green oval. The two intersect north of the Chalk Mound in the vicinity of Zollern Trench (Attachment #5). It was from this area that the unit moved north, as previously described.
6. A review of the records of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission shows that there was only one member of the Canadian Expeditionary Force that was lost with a service number containing the numbers 41261, at any time during the war, whose name is inscribed on the Vimy Memorial. That soldier was Private Herbert Cranage #441261 of the 5th Canadian Infantry Battalion (Attachment #6).
7. A preliminary review of the Graves Registration Report Form was initially misleading, as it shows that the Unknown Soldier with the number 41261 was a British Soldier. The document was clear however that the form had been changed from the remains being from the CEF and that the number had been struck out (Attachment #7).

8. The primary document for the identification of the remains is the “*Concentration of Graves (Exhumations and Reburials Burial Return)*”, which in this case shows that the remains exhumed at 57d R29 were those of a Canadian Soldier, holding the rank of Private, bearing the numerals 41262 (Attachment #8). The remains that we now know to be those of Private Herbert Cranage, of the 5th Canadian Infantry Battalion, were located in an area where there were a number of other Canadian Soldiers exhumed.

The same document, noted above, shows that Private Cox #487512 was exhumed from 57d R29 as well, although he was KIA on September 15th. That area is exactly where the PPCLI was in action on that date. This is the same area where the 5th Battalion was on the 26th-27th September 1916, on the west side of Courcellette moving north towards Zollern Trench. Additionally, Private Crothers #622333 of the 43rd Battalion was KIA at the Chalk Pits on September 21, 1916 while moving from Moquet Farm (R33) NE to the Zollern Trench (R29-R28). These cases provide confirmation that this is the correct area for the exhumation of all of the remains from these units, including those of Private Cranage of the 5th Infantry Battalion.

Action Required:

The “Investigative Report” has been prepared in accordance with the procedures and criteria set out by the CWGC, should they wish to make any changes to the commemoration details (Attachment #9).

It is our contention that the evidence is clear that the remains of Private Herbert Cranage #441261 were exhumed from the area of 57d R29 and subsequently buried in Plot 8 Row B Grave 12 of the Courcellette British Cemetery. The large number of dead, the missing digit in the number, and extreme pressure on those doing the exhumations and recording nearly 100 years ago, left Private Cranage as an unfortunate unknown.

ATTACHMENT #1

1. NO.	2. RANK OR RATING	3. SURNAMES	4. CHRISTIAN NAMES
441261.	Private	CRANAGE.	Herbert.
5. UNIT OR DEPT	6. DATE OF CASUALTY	7. R.C. FILE NO.	8. RELIGION
5th. Battalion	On or since 27-9-16.	649-0-12702.	Not stated.
9. NAME, RELATIONSHIP AND ADDRESS OF NEXT OF KIN			
10. CIRCUMSTANCES OF CASUALTY "Previously reported Wounded and Missing for official purposes presumed to have Died".			
11. LOCATION OF UNIT AT TIME OF CASUALTY NEAR COURCELETTE.			
NOTES: Items 12, 13 and 14 are not to be completed until grave is permanently located.			
12. CEMETERY	13. LOCATION OF CEMETERY	14. GRAVE LOCATION	15. REGISTERED NO. OF GRAVE
		Grave Plot Row	
16. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE TAKEN	17. REFERENCE NO.	18. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE AND CEMETERY SUPPLIED TO	
19. FURTHER PARTICULARS ON REVERSE SIDE OF SCOUT.			

ATTACHMENT #2

FORM R3
1054-1051-10-11-10

with leg. on A.R. *10345 1/2* *17061*

NUMBER 441261 RANK Pte. NAME C. CRANAGE. H.

UNIT 5th. Battalion. NEXT-OF-KIN

FILE NO. R.L.

DATE OF DEATH	CAUSE AND PLACE OF DEATH	CAS. SHEET NO
27-9-16. on or since.	Prev.rep. WOUNDED & MISSING; Now for Official purposes pres. to have "DIED".	A. 646.

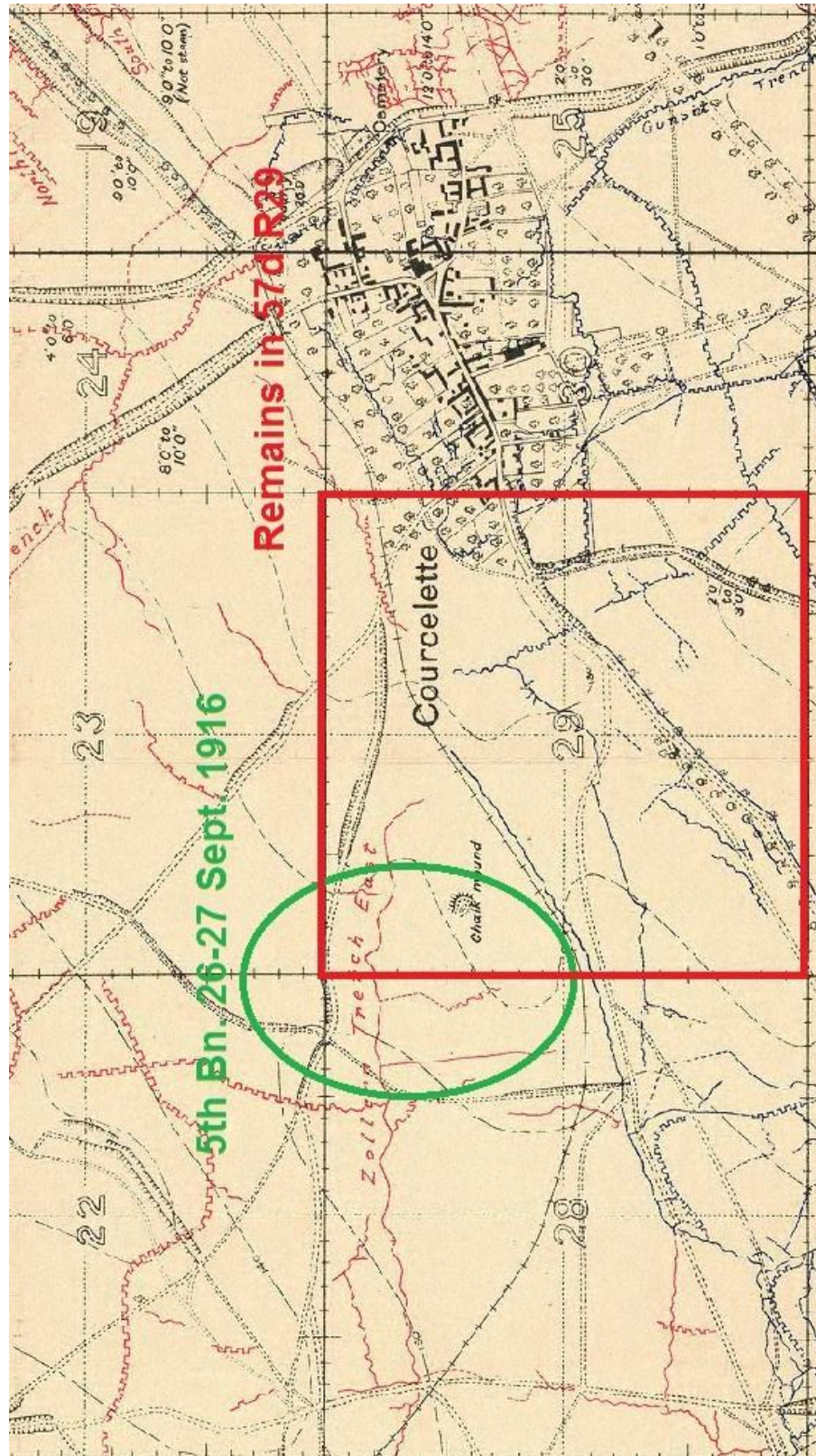
DATE OF BURIAL	PLACE OF BURIAL	DESCRIPTION OF GRAVE
	★ VIMY ★ MEMORIAL	

ATTACHMENT #3

WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY. (Erase heading not required.)				Army Form C. 2118.
Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendix
TRENCHES			our Patrols entered REGINA TRENCH on our right. Our captures during the day were three Machine Guns and numerous prisoners and stores.	
TRENCHES	27.9.16		Weather - fine in morning but showery at about 6 p.m. Wind - S. Ground - hard and dry till rain commenced. There was very little artillery fire after daybreak till about 10 p.m. so we were enabled to bring in wounded, send up the needed stores and carry on with consolidating our gains of the day before. The ALBERTA DRAGOONS did splendid work in carrying for the wounded. The 5th Battalion was now all in the HESSIAN TRENCH while the ZOLLERN TRENCH was held by our support Companies of the 7th Battalion. About 11 a.m. our Artillery commenced to pound REGINA TRENCH with the object of cutting the wire and it brought a heavy return fire from the enemy Artillery. The left flank of the 2nd Brigade had not advanced as far as the HESSIAN TRENCH on account of the 11th Division having failed to achieve their Objective and as a result the ground between our lines was swept by quite a heavy enfilade fire from enemy Machine Guns, probably in STUFF REDOUBT. At 11.45 a.m. the hostile Artillery fire was very heavy and Germans were seen moving along REGINA TRENCH and a counter-attack was prepared for. To help hold the Gap between the left flank of the 8th Battalion, two Platoons of the 7th Battalion were sent up from our supporting party in ZOLLERN TRENCH and these were replaced by two Platoons of the 10th Bn. which had been moved forward from FARBCK TRENCH. The expected counter-attack did not come to anything and the enemy's Artillery fire gradually slackened off to normal. At about 10 p.m. our relief 1st C.M.R. Battalion began to come in, and after bringing out all our wounded and burying most of our dead, the Battalion proceeded to Billets in RUE DE BRAY, ALBERT. A slight rain fell about 6 p.m. and the ground was very slippery and the walking poor. Casualties - Major WILLIAMS A. C. Killed : GATZ H. C. Killed Capt. CODDARD A. S. : : WALKER S. : Major CRAWFORD I. L. Wounded Capt. FINDLAY J. : : WILLIER C. F. : Lieut. BAKER J. STB. : : LAWSON R. C. : : GORDON C. H. : : CAMERON J. : : JAMES W. C. :	

TJ134. Wt. W708-776. 540000. 4/15. 5th J. C. & R.

ATTACHMENT #5



ATTACHMENT #6

☒ Initials
☐ Forename

Country
(commemorated in)

France

Cemetery or memorial

Vimy Memorial

War

Please select

Date of death: (starting)

Date of death: (ending)

Served with

☐ United Kingdom Forces
☐ Australian Forces
☐ New Zealand Forces
☒ Canadian Forces
☐ Indian Forces
☐ South African Forces
☐ Non-Commonwealth Nationals

1 record(s) match your search criteria

Name	Rank	Service Number	Date of Death	Age	Regiment / Service	Service Country	Grave / Memorial Reference	Cemetery / Memorial Name	Docs.
CRANAGE, HERBERT	Private	441261	27/09/1916	23	Canadian Infantry	Canadian		VIMY MEMORIAL	

Served in

☒ Army
☐ Air Force
☐ Navy
☐ Merchant Navy
☐ Civilian War Dead
☐ Miscellaneous

Unit

Rank

Service Number

*41261

Regiment

ATTACHMENT #7

EBA. COMPREHENSIVE REPORT. 8.9.20. Army Form W. 3372.

GRAVES REGISTRATION REPORT FORM.

3rd A.S.No.W/ *3132*

REPORT No. 2. SCHEDULE No. *92c*

COMMITTEE: COURCELLETTE.

PLACE OF BURIAL COURCELLET BRITISH CEMETERY.

Map Reference 57D.R.29.c.9.8.

The following are buried here:— *Exhumations*

Regiment	No.	Name	Rank and Initials	Date of Death	Cross Erected or G. R. U'd.	Plot, Row and Grave
43rd C.E.F.		UNKNOWN			All	1. ✓
1/7 Gordon Hrs.	5720	GILLESPIE ✓	PTE G.		crosses	2. ✓
4th C.F.A.	304016	MANLEY ✓	GNR.C.W.	4.11.16.	erected.	3. ✓
43rd C.E.F.	622333	CROTHERS ✓	PTE.			4. ✓
43/C.E.F.		UNKNOWN				5. ✓
-do-		UNKNOWN				6. ✓
B. E. F.		UNKNOWN BRITISH				7. ✓
C. E. F.		UNKNOWN				8. ✓
43rd C.E.F.	151617	DRAKE ✓	PTE J.E.			9. ✓
P.P.C.L.I.	487512	COX ✓	PTE H.G.			10. ✓
C. E. F.		UNKNOWN				11. ✓
-do-	41261	UNKNOWN BRITISH SOLDIER			<i>xy. 1065</i>	12. ✓
"		UNKNOWN				13. ✓
"		UNKNOWN				14. ✓
R. C. R.		UNKNOWN				15. ✓
6th N. Hants.	12883	CRISPE ✓	H.			16. ✓

1289

(6 31 5) W3160—P2723 109,000 9/19 HWV(P1024) Forms/W3372/3

7/12
a.d. 17.12.20.

27

COURCLETTE 2.63/E.

Canadian Burial Party

Serial No. 63.

CONCENTRATION OF GRAVES (Exhumation and Re-burials).

BURIAL RETURN.

Name of Cemetery of Re-burial. COURCLETTE BRITISH MILITARY, R.29.d.O.9.

Plot	Row	Grave	Map Reference where body found.	Was Cross on Grave?	Regimental particulars.	Means of Identification.	Were any effects forwarded to Base?
			Map 57D.				
8	B	1	R.29.	G.R.U.	C.D.75. CDN. SOLDIER. 43rd BN.		No.
8	B	2	R.29.	G.R.U.	C.Q.36. 5720 Pte. GILLESPIE. G. 1/7 Gord.Hdrs.		No.
8	B	3	R.29.	G.R.U.	3. 304016 Gnr. MANLEY. C.W. 4th Bty. C.F.A.		No.
8	B	4	R.29.	No Cross	622333 Pte. CROTHERS. 43rd Bn. C.E.F.		Disc.
8	B	5	R.29.	G.R.U.	C.P.77. CDN. SOLDIER.		No.
6	B	6	R.29.	No Cross	UNKNOWN CDN. SOLDIER		No
8	B	7	R.29.	G.R.U.	N.Y.83. BRIT. SOLDIER		No.
8	B	8	R.29.	G.R.U.	C.P.84. CDN. SOLDIER.		No.
8	B	9	R.29.	No Cross	151417 Pte. DRAKE. J.E. 43rd Ddn.Bn.		Disc.
8	B	10	R.29.	G.R.U.	C.P.49. 487512 Pte. COX. P.P.C.L.I.		No.
8	B	11	R.29.	No Cross	UNKNOWN CDN. SOLDIER		No.
8	B	12	R.29.	G.R.U.	C.P.78. 41261 Pte. CDN. SOLDIER		No.
8	B	13	R.29.	G.R.U.	C.P.79. CDN. SOLDIER		No.
8	B	14	R.29.	G.R.U.	C.P.87. CDN. SOLDIER		No.
8	B	15	R.29.	G.R.U.	C.D.44. CDN. SOLDIER. R.C.R.		No.

ATTACHMENT #9

This “*Reporting and Review*” attachment is provided to assist all parties in the submission of an investigative report related to the identification of the burial location, or headstone markings, of a member of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) during the Great War 1914-1921. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) receives a copy of this report in the event they wish to make changes to the commemoration details. In order to alter the records, the CWGC has set out their criteria for the procedure and submission of cases for review, as detailed below. The CWGC is under no obligation to make changes based on a report.

Procedure:	Guideline Criteria for Submission:
All new identification cases need to be assessed in the first instance by the Canadian Agency (CA) and submissions should go to their office directly. After an initial assessment, if the Agency feels that the case is compelling, they will then pass all the documentation to the Commemorations Team at the Commission's Head Office. Head Office will then review the case and inform the CA of their findings. The Canadian authorities will then decide whether or not any changes to the arrangements for commemoration are required and inform the Commission accordingly.	Cases need to present clear and convincing evidence to prove the identity of a casualty and must not be based on assumption or speculation. The Commission's Commemoration Team will also consider whether the findings of a better informed contemporary investigation are being revisited and if there is any new evidence to consider. By way of example, it is unlikely that the Commission would support a revision of the arrangements for the commemoration where it is apparent that no new evidence is being presented and, a better informed previous decision is being revisited some 100 years later.

The following have participated in the preparation, review and submission of this report on a voluntary basis. Those noted below have read the investigative report and compared it to the criteria set out by the CWGC, as a guiding principle, and have agreed to have their name included as part of the review team. The CWGC may contact any of the reviewers at the e-mail address provided below.

Name	Affiliation	E-mail	Contribution
Ralph McLean	Private Researcher South Africa War Graves Project	ralph@southafricawargraves.org	Principal Investigator
Richard Laughton	Private Researcher LMC Great War Research Company	rlaughton@laughton.ca	Report Author
Chris Wight	Private Researcher Canadian Expeditionary Force Study Group	guardsmancgg@hotmail.com	Project Reviewer